Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PA-01 ICA-11 SY-05 /067 W

-----049803 150218Z /14

R 131045Z JUN 78 FM USINT BAGHDAD TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6321 INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS AMEMBASSY KUWAIT AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: NA TAGS: PINS, IZ

SUBJ: BOMB IN DOWNTOWN BAGHDAD

- 1. BOMB EXPLODED IN CROWDED BANK STREET IN DOWNTOWN BAGHDAD MORNING OF JUNE 12. REPORTEDLY, TWO WOMEN WERE INJURED BY WHAT WAS APPARENTLY A SMALL EXPLOSIVE DEVICE ATTACHED TO A PASSENGER CAR. EXPLOSION IN THIS CENTER OF IRAQI FINANCIAL LIFE, ALSO A BUSTLING AREA OF SMALL SHOPS NEAR THE BAZAAR, CAUSED PANDEMONIUM.
- 2. GUESSES ON IDENTIY OF PERPETRATORS RANGE FROM SYRIAN AGENTS TO LOCAL COMMUNISTS WITH NO FIRM LEADS KNOWN AT THIS TIME. DUE TO SIZE OF THE CHARGE IT COULD HAVE BEEN PLANTED ON AN INNOCENT VEHICLE, FACTOR WHICH WILL MAKE IT VERY DIFFICULT TO TRACE DOWN THE CULPRITS.
- 3. INCIDENTS OF THIS KIND HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY INFREQUENT IN BAGHDAD THIS YEAR WITH LAST MAJOR BOMBING HAVING OCCURRED IN AUGUST 1977. THAT INCIDENT, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHICH TOGETHER WITH RESULTANT FIRE CLAIMED 35 CASUALTIES, WAS NEVER EXPLAINED TO IRAQI PUBLIC, ALTHOUGH SYRIAN INVOLVEMENT WAS HINTED. BAGHDAD RESIDENTS NOW EXPECT THAT SECURITY PRECAUTIONS IN CROWDED AREAS OF THE CITY WILL BECOME MORE RIGOROUS.

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